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## BOOK REVIEWS

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*A Manual of Elementary Practical Physics for High Schools.* By JULIUS HORTVET, B.S., Teacher of Physics in the East High School, Minneapolis. Publisher, H. W. Wilson, Minneapolis.

THIS manual includes about forty experiments illustrating the fundamental principles of physics. In its general plan the book is similar to most other works along this line. In some important particulars, however, there is considerable difference. First, the author does not give a large number of experiments from which to select. Second, he does not bind himself down to experiments recommended by any committee, or required by any particular college. The experiments given, however, are well selected and illustrate all the fundamental principles of mechanics, sound, heat, light, electricity, and magnetism. Third, he does not lay great stress upon the inductive method. In his preface he says: "While in theory much is conceded in favor of inductive methods in science teaching, it is found in practice that the *purely* inductive method fails at points where it is expected to do the greatest amount of good." I think the experience of a great many science teachers will bear him out in this statement.

In taking up an experiment the author generally begins by giving a short historical narrative leading up to a statement and discussion of the law. The apparatus to be used is then carefully described, and attention is called to the principal sources of error. The procedure comes next. This is made very clear without being too lengthy, and includes suggestions for tabulating results. He concludes each experiment with a series of questions and exercises, leading the pupil to interpret his results and to apply the law which has been verified. The book is to be strongly recommended on account of the extreme care with which all directions are given. With this book in hand it seems that any teacher of physics could conduct a thoroughly satisfactory course in this branch; for neither teacher nor pupil can escape catching the spirit of earnestness and cautiousness which pervades the book and inspires one to do the work with the utmost care and to obtain the most accurate results possible.

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*A History of England, for High Schools and Academies.* By KATHERINE COMAN and ELIZABETH KIMBALL KENDALL. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1899. \$1.25.

THERE has long been an urgent need for an English history which should embody the best results of modern scholarship and pedagogy. In the opinion of the reviewer the book before us is one of the best now upon the market and deserves careful consideration from every teacher of history. It is well written; it shows judicious selection of matter, a well balanced treatment, and it contains what has long been a

desideratum—a working bibliography, with marginal notes: both, however, in need of large additions.

There are, however, obvious defects. The treatment of questions of anthropology and ethnology is out of date, and needs to be checked by reference to Ripley's *Races of Europe*. The arrangement is faulty; e. g., the invention of the steam engine is recounted after Gladstone's last administration. Historical facts are sometimes loosely stated: e. g., "the scramble for the possession of the dark continent" really began with Germany, not England, as asserted on p. 490. There are such obvious slips as "pax Romanum" (p. 22) and "He is the only one who *have*" (p. 44). But the most fundamental fault is a marked weakness in the treatment of economic matters: such books as Bücher's *Entstehung der Volkswirtschaft* and Schmoller's *Mercantile System* might have been consulted with profit. For example, there is no clear analysis of the economic causes for the growth and decay of feudalism, nor of the social and political consequences of division of labor and the development of transportation. In consequence of this the causal relation in history is obscured: events and changes come in the old-time, pre-Darwinian, *deus ex machina*, fashion. This is indeed the one radical defect of the book.

It would be a matter of interest to know why only books in English are referred to. Were no others consulted? Or did the authors assume an ignorance of tongues among high-school teachers?

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#### AMERICAN LITERATURE

*A Short History of American Literature* by WALTER C. BRONSON, designed principally for use in schools and colleges. Boston: D. C. Heath & Co., 1900. 16mo. Pp. x + 374.

"American Literature," by CHARLES F. JOHNSON in his *Outline History of English and American Literature*, pp. 427-545. New York: American Book Company, 1900. 12mo. Pp. 552.

"The American School of Historians," by ALBERT BUSHNELL HART in the *International Monthly*, September 1900, Vol. II, pp. 294-322. Burlington, Vt.

THE number of histories of American literature is constantly swelling. In recent years Professors Brander Matthews, Katharine Lee Bates, Pancoast, Beers, Albert H. Smyth, and several others have essayed volumes in this field. The latest, and one of the best of the briefer histories, comes from the pen of Professor Bronson, of Brown University. In appearance the book is one of the most attractive of recent text-books; and a perusal shows it to be a substantial and valuable contribution to American literary history. "Even the earlier portions," says the author, "are based almost wholly upon a study of the literature at first hand;" for which he has enjoyed peculiar advantages, having access to such important collections as the Harris collection of American poetry and the John Carter Brown Library in Providence. Consequently we expect to find a fresh, unhackneyed treatment of the subject, and we are not disappointed.